

# COUNTY NEWS



PUBLISHED FOR EMPLOYEES OF THE COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO

January 2003

## Environmental Health Technicians on the Front Line of Defense Against West Nile Virus

When the West Nile Virus makes its way into San Diego County, Environmental Health's Vector Surveillance and Control division will most likely be among the first to find out.

That's because the department constantly has technicians out in the field, on the lookout for diseases carried by "vectors," which means an animal or insect that can transmit diseases to humans or cause a public health nuisance. It's the technician's job to monitor local wildlife such as mosquitoes, rodents, ticks and squirrels for signs of plague, hantavirus, Lyme disease and the West Nile virus.

Technician Ron Ramos spends the majority of each work day out on the road, setting traps so that the County can monitor for these diseases. His journey to protect the residents of San Diego County takes him to the backcountry of Warner Springs,

to the heights of Palomar Mountain, to the waters of the Pacific Ocean, and into run-down buildings.

"I know the county pretty well," he said. He's been doing this work for 13 years but says there's always something new, especially in terms of diseases to be aware of and places to monitor.

With West Nile virus on everyone's mind, the department has increased its surveillance activities as part of an aggressive strategic plan formed with other County departments and outside agencies.

During the winter, the department typically shifts away from monitoring mosquitoes, but not this year. The two technicians who focus solely on surveillance activities will continue to monitor mosquitoes through the traditionally inactive season. This includes trapping the mosquitoes and  
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*Environmental Health Technician Ron Ramos sets a mosquito trap along the San Diego River. Because of the West Nile virus, the County continues to monitor mosquitoes even during their traditionally inactive season.*

## Annual Campaign Aims to Show County Employees Have a Heart

It's going to be a "Super" campaign for this year's annual CECO/United Way giving drive. In honor of San Diego hosting professional football's championship game in late January, the County will kick off its employee giving campaign with a "Super Bowl" theme.

This year's campaign will start in late January and run through March, with Health and Human Services Agency Director Dr. Rodger Lum as the campaign chairperson. Each year, the County joins together with the United Way to provide employees an opportunity to help San Diego's community organizations via a payroll deduction. Employees have the option of donating to CECO—the County Employees Charitable Organization—or United Way.



County employees have been giving to CECO since it was founded in 1956. The organization is run by County employees who volunteer their time so that 100 percent of employee donations go to help the

**Last year, more than 20 percent of County employees pledged \$400,000 in support of CECO and United Way; an increase of almost 15 percent from the year before.**

local nonprofits. At the annual CECO luncheon in October, 96 community programs received CECO grants.

Last year, more than 20 percent of

County employees pledged to give close to \$400,000 in support of CECO and United Way. This was an increase of close to 15 percent from the year before. Not all that money was realized, however. With the increased number of retirements over the last year, collected contributions fell short. Campaign organizers hope that the new employees will step in and help fill the void so that County employees can continue their exemplary work in giving back to their community.

To receive a brochure explaining CECO, or to find out more about the County's campaign, contact Lynn Eldred of the Health and Human Services Agency via email at [lynn.eldred@sdcounty.ca.gov](mailto:lynn.eldred@sdcounty.ca.gov).

## NewsBriefs

### County Achievements Applauded

The California State Association of Counties (CSAC) announced its 2002 Challenge Award winners, giving the County accolades for the San Pasqual Academy. The Academy is the nation's first residential education campus for foster youth. The County Library's Books by Mail program received a Merit Award, and 12 others received honorable mentions. CSAC is a nonprofit organization that offers leadership support to its 58 member counties.

The Challenge Awards recognize the innovative and creative spirit of California counties for finding new and effective ways of providing programs and services to their citizens. For more information, go to the "County News Extra" section of the online version of *County News*.

### Score One for a Good Guy

A state-of-the-art high school scoreboard was dedicated to former County employee Neil Rossi, who passed away in September. Rossi was the Chief Investment Officer for the County by day, but in his free time he was an avid supporter of sports at his sons' school, Steele Canyon High.

Rossi was instrumental in forming a booster club for the school and raising the funds needed to purchase the scoreboard. The scoreboard was dedicated in his memory on December 6, and a few weeks later his good works were highlighted with a 10 Leadership Award from KGTU.

### New Name for Animal Caregivers

The Department of Animal Control will soon be getting a new name: Department of Animal Services. The Board of Supervisors approved the recommendation because the department's mission has changed over the years to include such tasks as rescuing animals from abuse, cruelty and neglect. The change is not expected to happen until late February, because Supervisors must approve an ordinance to make it official.

### Park Staff Honored

Each April, a group of avid hikers begin a 2,650-mile trek up the Pacific Crest Trail at the Lake Morena County Park. At a December celebration, the hikers said "thank you" to park staff who give them a great send-off each year. The Pacific Crest Trail begins at the Mexico border and runs the full length of California, Oregon, and Washington to the Canadian border. The hike organizers decided to honor Lake Morena staff for the support, encouragement and assistance they give to the kickoff event.

### Help the Hospital!

The auxiliary organization that supports the County Psychiatric Hospital is holding an opportunity drawing for a number of great prizes. Proceeds from the drawing will benefit the auxiliary's program to hire a person to help patients who are eligible for Medi-Cal through the process of getting enrolled.

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## In *Walt's* Words

### Crisis Fund Helps When Times Are Tough

For many of us County employees, our jobs involve helping people in our community who have fallen on hard times.

Unfortunately, sometimes it is one of us, a County employee, who finds him- or herself in financial peril.

If that does happen, it's good to know there's a place to go. It's called the crisis fund, one of many programs funded by the County Employees Charitable Organization, or CECO.

The fund is a sort of life preserver for those who are caught off-guard by one of life's cruel turns. Maybe it's a car that needs major repairs at the worst possible time, when other bills have already wiped out surplus cash. Or, it could be a sick child who needs constant care, keeping a parent off the job and depriving him or her of a much-needed paycheck. Or, a parent passes away and there's no money to buy a plane ticket to attend the funeral.

For those of you who don't know, CECO is funded solely by donations from County employees. The money goes to many worthy causes in San Diego County, and one of those is the crisis fund. This money is intended to keep employees afloat during a temporary crisis that threatens their well-being, and that of their family. Maybe they need a one-time rent or mortgage payment to keep a roof over their head. Or money to keep the lights on, or food on the table. In any of these cases, the crisis fund can help.

Right now, in this time of economic uncertainty, the need is more acute than ever. If you give to CECO through a payroll deduction, you will have the satisfaction of knowing that every penny of your donation helps those who need it. CECO is run by County employees like yourself, and none of the donated funds are spent on administrative overhead.

Beginning this month, CECO will launch its annual fund-raising campaign, and you will all be attending presentations in your departments. Please find it in your hearts to make a gift to CECO in the coming year, even if it is only a couple of dollars per paycheck. The next person who needs help could be sitting just a few feet away from you.

Here's wishing for a great year, both for CECO and our entire County family.

*Walt*

Walt Ekard  
Chief Administrative Officer

# The Supervisor's View



By Supervisor Bill Horn

Part of an ongoing series by the Board of Supervisors.

Over the last three years, those of us in North County have gone to war twice against Mexican fruit flies. Today in Valley Center we are dealing with the worst infestation of Mexican fruit flies in the history of San Diego County. It's much more serious than what happened in Fallbrook.

On the front lines have been our County Agricultural Commissioner, Kathleen Thuner and her staff. Thank you, Kathleen for your professionalism and grace under pressure.

We have been in constant contact with State Agriculture Secretary Bill Lyons and together we toured the quarantine area in Valley Center. Secretary Lyons has promised full cooperation to eradicate a pest that threatens to destroy the fourth most important part of San Diego's economy. We appreciate the State's increased funding to trap fruit flies in urban centers. However, State workers in Sacramento could use a refresher course in geography. Sometimes I think people up north forget that San Diego is a border county. We need more funding to trap flies in rural areas such as Valley Center and Fallbrook where the bulk of our agriculture grows.

I call upon Agriculture officials, Customs, the Sheriff and District Attorney to insure that we have a seamless team approach to secure our borders. Drug smugglers are using Mexican fruit shipments to conceal their drugs. Homeland security must include economic security.

Compounding our crisis are post-election State budget cuts. While we wait to see how hard San Diego County will be impacted, please know that the County has a contingency plan. Under the leadership of Chief Administrative Officer Walt Ekard, our departments are responding to extraordinary challenges to protect essential services.

To each County employee, thank you for pulling together during these difficult times.

## [ Ver•ba•tim ]

Letters from satisfied customers served by County employees.

**Bob Baker** (Assessor/Recorder/Clerk) was thanked for his courtesy and professionalism in dealing with an assessment appeal.

"I totally got the sense from you of your high integrity in the way you approach your profession; I truly believe that you treat 100 percent fairly the people you deal with if the facts justify it in their favor."

**Theresa Harmon, Susan Delos Santos, and Laurie Feathers** (HHSA, Family Resource Center) were recognized for providing "the best customer service ever."

"Theresa is my worker and almost every time I call her she answers her phone! That is the best. I am almost always in and out of the office in 30 minutes or less. Also, when I leave the office I still feel like a human being. At the front desk, Susan and Laurie are very informative and always willing to help with a nice smile."

**Ron Coca** (Assessor/Recorder/Clerk) received praise from a customer as he guided her through the appeals process.

"He made me feel comfortable during a very difficult time. I am truly thankful for the time and courtesy shown to me."

**George Dickason** (Medical Examiner) was commended by a coworker for his heroic efforts in getting help to a despondent woman caller who was threatening suicide.

"I'm glad that I was working with him that day to see the caring way he deals with family members, not just in this instance but in every case, every day."

**Gary Kendrick** (Assessor/Recorder/Clerk) was praised for his help to a customer.

"Having employees of his caliber is indeed rewarding and a great asset to your office as well as to the public you serve."

The **Edgemoor staff** was praised by a patient's brother for the overall quality of care provided.

"In my opinion, nobody does it better than Edgemoor. The quality of care never seems to vary. It is always excellent."

**Lourdes Distor and Asmerom Gabriel** (Treasurer/Tax Collector) were thanked for their outstanding customer service when a customer inadvertently overpaid her property taxes.

"They were courteous, well informed and extremely helpful. Looks like you have an outstanding team in place."

Submissions to the Verbatim column are always welcomed! Just send a copy of any letter citing good customer service to County News at MS A359, or fax to (619) 685-2469.

## Vector Surveillance

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making sure they're tested for disease.

The department will also increase outreach efforts to educate the public about how to curb mosquito breeding, as well as focus on worker safety for County staff members.

"We're gearing up and we'll be ready when we get a positive case," said Dan Reid, Chief of the Community Health Division of Environmental Health.

The department also now monitors dead birds for the West Nile virus, as this was how the disease was first detected in other states, and monitors a couple of flocks of "sentinel chickens." The chickens are "off duty" during the winter, but during the rest of year blood samples are taken peri-

odically to monitor for the disease. The department is working with residents to help reduce mosquito breeding, and even offers free mosquito fish, which eat mosquito larvae found in stagnant water. It also works with other agencies, such as state department of Fish and Game, to improve water flow in rivers and streams to deter mosquito breeding.

Even with all the extra efforts, Reid understands that Environmental Health won't be able to completely control the disease, "but we're trying to minimize the impact."

For more information about Environmental Health and its vector surveillance and control program, go to [www.sdcounty.ca.gov/deh](http://www.sdcounty.ca.gov/deh). For more information about the West Nile virus, go to [www.sdfightthebite.com](http://www.sdfightthebite.com).



# DIBBS Ceremony Awards Idea Generators for Savings Topping \$1M

Awards totaling close to \$60,000 were given out at a December DIBBS ceremony honoring 86 County employees for their money-saving ideas. The County's Do It Better By Suggestion program has generated more than \$1.1 million in savings in the first half of the current fiscal year.

Pat Zeitounian of General Services was awarded \$20,000 for her effort to fix a billing error by San Diego Gas &

Electric. Zeitounian, who has a passion for energy conservation, became convinced that something was wrong when—in spite of the County's conservation efforts—the electric bill for the County Operation Center Annex went up 56 percent. Her persistence paid off for the County: a new meter was installed and the County received an \$838,000 refund from SDG&E.

Zeitounian's efforts were not

only recognized by the Board of Supervisors with the maximum DIBBS award allowed, she received a generous helping of media attention as well.

"It's been more attention than I ever thought would happen," Zeitounian said.

She stressed that it was a

team effort in that many people helped research the problem.

"I just didn't let it go," she said of her role.

To find out more about who received what at the December DIBBS ceremony, go to the "County News Extra" in the online version of *County News*.

## NEWSMakers NEWSMakers

**Dan Kelley** was appointed Assistant Treasurer/Tax Collector. He will serve as the Treasurer/Tax Collector's top aide. Kelley previously served as the labor relations manager for the City of San Diego for four years. Prior to that he worked for the County in a variety of positions including labor relations specialist.

**Jon Van Rhyn**, Environmental Health, was elected to serve on the board of directors for the California Stormwater Quality Association. The Association was formerly known as the California Stormwater Quality Task Force, but has recently incorporated into a nonprofit or-

ganization. The association assists with the development and implementation of storm water management programs throughout California.

**Ron Kelley**, Board of Supervisors—District One, was promoted to the rank of Commander in the naval reserves. Kelley serves as a senior policy adviser for Supervisor Greg Cox and has been a reserve member since 1997. Prior to joining the County, he was active duty military for 10 years. As a show of appreciation for the County's support of his reserve career, Kelley asked to have Supervisor Cox participate in the promotion ceremony.



Pat Zeitounian of General Services accepts her award, along with her husband, Nick, and two of her sons, Anthony and Alex.

### NewsBriefs

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Tickets are on sale through April for \$1 each or six tickets for \$5. The grand prize is two tickets on United Airlines to any destination in the continental 48 states, five nights stay at a Marriott Suites, and a voucher for a five-day car rental. Other prizes includes a Las Vegas getaway, and dinner and a limo.

For more information about the opportunity drawing, call (619) 447-7814.

### New Year, New Numbers

On Jan. 10, local experts will gather at the County Administration Center to forecast the County's economy in the year ahead at the 19<sup>th</sup> annual Eco-

nomic Roundtable. Panelists will discuss financial stability, business opportunities, job outlook and commercial and residential growth potential for 2003. The roundtable will be aired live on CTN from 8:30 to 11:30 a.m. on Jan. 10 and re-broadcast throughout the month.

### Harlem Hoopla

Be a part of the world's most unforgettable basketball experience. Enjoy the mad skills of the Harlem Globetrotters, and do it at a discount thanks to the County's DIBBS program. Special rate tickets are available for the Feb. 21 performance at the San Diego Sports Arena. For more information, contact your department DIBBS coordinator or call (619) 578-5781.

County News is published for the 17,000 employees of the County of San Diego.

#### Board of Supervisors

Greg Cox, District 1  
Dianne Jacob, District 2  
Pam Slater, District 3  
Ron Roberts, District 4  
Bill Horn, District 5

#### Chief Administrative Officer

Walter F. Ekard

This information is available upon request in alternative formats for persons with disabilities.



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# COUNTY NEWS *Extra*

## Service Awards

Congratulations to County employees reaching the following milestones in January:

### 40 years

Thomas J. Bigley (Sheriff)

### 35 years

Connie Cooks (HHSA)

### 30 years

Lorenzo W. Alejandria (Air Pollution Control District)

George G. Beall (District Attorney)

L Humberstad Castelan (Sheriff)

Charles E. Crabtree (Superior Court)

Michelle S. Longtin (Superior Court)

Victoria M. Mangarin (Public Defender)

Barbara E. Nelson (HHSA)

Jorge M. Salas (Assessor)

### 25 years

Carolee Albrecht (Superior Court)

Arthur C. Boyer (General Services)

Sandra L. Britt (HHSA)

Othella M. Burns (HSSA)

Jaime C. Diaz (HHSA)

Ben Floridi (HHSA)

Efrain Garcia (Sheriff)

Mark P. Kirkendall (Child Support Services)

Mark Lewis (Public Works)

Nick S. Marinovich (General Services)

James O. McAllaster (HHSA)

Candace C. Nash (HHSA)

Julia M. Quinn (Public Works)

Pantaleon Y. Raagas, Jr. (Public Works)

Marilyn Stevens (HHSA)

Jane L. Sweet (HHSA)

Cheryl A. Sykes (Superior Court)

Harry I. Trout (Public Works)

Alicia Vicars (Alternate Public Defender)

Virginia M. Zarp (HHSA)

### 20 years

Robert O. Amador (District Attorney)

Luis M. Aragon (District Attorney)

Catherine V. Bennett (HHSA)

Jeffrey A. Clark (General Services)

Yunice I. Danque (HHSA)

Monalisa Y. Dean (HHSA)

Katherine L. Ehgelhardt (Superior Court)

Robert N. Eichler (District Attorney)

Maria Fernandez (District Attorney)

Craig E. Fisher (District Attorney)

Janice Graham (Chief Administrative Office)

Mary C. Hudson (Probation)

Bobbie A. Jones (Environmental Health)

William A. Kaw (Sheriff)

Theodore L. Leach (General Services)

Pamela J. Lollis (HHSA)

Gillian A. Meyer (HHSA)

Evan G. Miller (District Attorney)

Llewelyn Munter (Environmental Health)

Henry Razo (General Services)

Diana L. Sharp (Probation)

Phu T. Ton (HHSA)

Gregory A. Walden (District Attorney)

Eloy H. Zetina (General Services)

*County News Extra* includes expanded information about and for County employees. If you have something you'd like considered for either *County News* or *County News Extra*, please contact the newsletter editor at (619) 595-4632 or e-mail at [rene.carmichael@sdcounty.ca.gov](mailto:rene.carmichael@sdcounty.ca.gov). Items can also be faxed to (619) 595-4664 or mailed to MS A-359, Attn: *County News*.

## Retirements

The San Diego County Employees Retirement Association reports the following employees recently retired:

Marla J. Boling	Bruce M. Fulton	Janet L. Kahle	John W. Pergrin, Jr.
Maria L. Carangian	Norman J. Gero	David R. Kirk	Lydia J. Pond
John J. Castro	Jeff Glatstein	Mallory Larson	Hawley E. Ridenour
Peter J. Cross	Walter S. Goffney	Lee A. Lecuru	Corazon L. Santos
Maria E. Cruz	Ella M. Goodman	Selfina V. Linzaga	Nancy L. Simonson
Guadalupe Dawson	William M. Graham	Robert J. Looney	Carolyn L. Stein
David G. Decker	Karen S. Gray	Glacia W. Loper	Paul L. Swafford
Linda L. Duffy	Dorothy Grider	William C. Lorenz	Dolores V. Tuncab
Sandra Eisensmith	Doris Hanna	John M. McBroom	Fidelito E. Valenzuela
Charlotte A. Enterline	Danny J. Hereford	Patricia Ninich-Salazar	Joy D. Watkins
Leslie B. Fleming	Minnie A. Ignacio	Susan C. Nyquist	Charles L. Whitney
Renee B. French	Stephen A. Irving	Nora T. Oliver	Michael D. Williams

## In Memoriam

Dixie C. Angelman (Welfare, 1971)	11/08	Leota K. Michel (HHSA, 1968)	11/20
William T. Bailey (HHSA, 1993)	11/14	Lue S. Morgan (Auditor & Controller, 1981)	09/03
J. William Cox (HHSA, 1993)	11/11	Eleanor Nechamkin (HHSA, 1990)	11/24
Thomas R. Devin (Parks & Recreation, 1977)	10/29	Sam C. Palumbo (HHSA, 1999)	11/10
Philip Hallford (Social Services, 1987)	10/30	Bryan G. Reese (Sheriff, 1985)	11/04
Frank Hyla (Sheriff, 1981)	11/06	Philip C. Schwab (Sheriff, 1977)	10/30
Constance P. Joe (HHSA, 2000)	10/24	Amelia Y. Simmons (Social Services, 1988)	11/10
Virginia Kirwood (Auditor & Controller, 1978)	10/22	Jerry Thompson (Public Works, 1998)	11/19
G. Ardella Lunsford (Welfare, 1978)	10/31	Helen M. Webb (Hospital, 1969)	11/13
Miles P. Mattingly (Welfare, 1978)	11/02	Clayton Willford (Social Services, 1981)	11/22
Lois K. McHenry (Sheriff, 2002)	09/06		

Our thoughts and prayers go out to the family and friends of these active County employees: Ignacio V. Cazier, Probation (10/28), William R. Jarboe, Parks & Recreation (11/12), and Natale R. Luongo, Child Support Services (11/04).



## County Staff Spread Holiday Cheer

### VIP Collection a Success

Volunteers in Probation, a nonprofit that supports probationers and their families, put out a call to help the kids of people on probation. With the support of the Probation Department staff, VIP collected and wrapped more than 300 new and very nice gifts. The presents filled up an empty office and two cubicles.



*Santa's helpers organize the holiday donations. From left: Tammy Heslop, Zosie Domingo, Andrea Gomillion, and Maureen Connelly.*

### Holiday Auction Benefits Community Organizations

The Special Education Services unit of Children's Mental Health Services raised \$834 dollars as part of a special holiday auction to support three community organizations.

The Special Education Services unit provides mental health assessment and case management services to eligible special education students. For the second year, staff has decided to celebrate the holiday spirit by joining together to support other family-oriented agencies. The money raised through the auction was donated to the Toussant Teen Center, Straight from the Heart, and the Senior Community Centers in appreciation of their work to serve troubled teens, seniors, and foster youth and families.

### DCSS Sponsors Aquatic Adventure

Attorneys and paralegals in the Legal Services Division of Child Support Services treated 38 underprivileged children to a field trip to the Birch Aquarium and lunch in December. The kids were third-graders from Laurel Elementary School in Oceanside, a Title I school. Title I schools serve an attendance area in which at least 40 percent of the children are from low-income families and help students who may be low-achieving, have limited English proficiency, are delinquent, at-risk or disabled.

Attorneys Mischelle Martin and Phillip Lindsay along with paralegals Elizabeth Jablecki and Jessica Carruitero raised funds from legal division staff to cover the costs of the field trip. Their

efforts also secured the donation of a charter bus from Sundance Bus Lines; a \$100 scholarship from Birch Aquarium to help with the admission fee; and pizzas from Sammy's Woodfired Pizza. Five legal staff members accompanied the children, teachers and parent chaperones on the field trip.

"This was very successful and these little guys were so excited," said Shannon Welton, Legal Services Unit Chief. "Many of them have never been out of North County and never done many things we take for granted such as seeing a movie in the theater, visiting amusement parks and other event sites. We are really excited that they had this opportunity."

### County Counsel Extends Holiday Generosity South of the Border

County Counsel staff joined in to make this Christmas a merry one for more than 100 children at the Door of Faith orphanage in Baja California.

The project was organized by Paula Roach, who is a board member of a nonprofit organi-

zation that works with orphanages in Mexico. All divisions within County Counsel participated in the holiday project, with staff members "adopting" a child and picking out gifts such as toys and clothes for the orphans who range from a few

weeks up to 23 years old.

There was such an outpouring of generosity among the staff that the office not only delivered approximately 350 gifts to the children, but also gave an additional \$500 to purchase a horse for the orphanage.

Also helping with donations were a number of local businesses, as well as the Mac Hudson Foundation. Roach said that many of the County Counsel employees who "adopted" an orphan also got their families involved in purchasing and wrapping the gifts, as well as writing special cards and letters to the children.



*County Counsel collected and delivered approximately 350 gifts for the children at the Door of Faith orphanage in Baja California.*

## CSAC Awards

The following County programs were honored by the California State Association of Counties in November:

### **San Pasqual Academy for Adolescent Foster Youth Challenge Award Winner**

The academy is the nation's first residential education campus for foster youth. It was born out of the County's need to provide adolescent foster youth with alternatives to being placed in temporary foster or group homes.

### **County Library Books-by-Mail Program Merit Award Winner**

The Library's Books-By-Mail program provides library materials free to County residents who are homebound, disabled, or lack transportation to library branches or mobile units. The program started with 10 customers in 2000 and now serves more than 200, circulating more than 1,000 items each month.

### **Competitive Fleet Services Honorable Mention**

Fleet Management manages the County's 3,400 fleet vehicles and recently implemented a strategic plan to offer service and parts more efficiently at less cost. The County has saved nearly \$100,000 in the last three years.

### **South Region's Partnership for the Public's Health Honorable Mention**

HHSA started a community outreach in the south region to help residents create healthier lifestyles. To date, more than 600 residents have participated in the community's public health planning and health education activities.

### **Local Branch and Inter/Intranet Services Honorable Mention**

The Assessor/Recorder/Clerk's office now offers real-time recording of real estate documents throughout the county. This service was built on the County's existing document platform, and is the only one in the state to guarantee the release of documents the following day online.

### **Service Ratings for Poll Workers Honorable Mention**

The Registrar of Voters has streamlined the process of selecting and assigning poll workers by implementing a standardized rating system. These improvements have increased morale among poll workers and led to an improved experience for voters in San Diego County.

### **Comprehensive County Customer Service Honorable Mention**

The County's Customer Service Center offers comprehensive measurements regarding customer satisfaction with County services, and then uses the data to design and implement tools to improve quality. Three years after the center was established, surveys showed a dramatic increase in the quality of customer service, with the lowest rating received by a department being 86 percent satisfaction among customers.

### **Bridging the Digital Divide Honorable Mention**

By working with the San Diego Futures Foundation, the County is able to help bring technology to many underserved communities. The County donates the computers to the foundation, which refurbishes them, places them in the

community and provides follow-up technical support. Last year more than 1,000 computers were donated to various local groups and schools.

### **Breaking Cycles Honorable Mention**

Probation works with numerous law enforcement and community agencies, schools and organizations to offer substance abuse treatment, youth and family counseling and intensive in-home support to youthful offenders and their families. Since 1997, the program has served more than 4,700 youth offenders and their families, with 84 percent successfully avoiding additional brushes with the law.

### **San Diego Child Support Information and Referral Phone Center Honorable Mention**

Child Support Services is in the second year of pilot program to provide more efficient and effective service to its clients. The goal was to streamline the call process at the center to handle an increasing volume of calls, as well as elevating staff training. The department is now able to handle most incoming calls in less than two minutes and resolve 92 percent of the citizen issues during the first phone call.

### **Juvenile Court Web Site Honorable Mention**

The Juvenile Court Web Site uses cutting-edge technology to give representatives from the courts, law enforcement and schools to view the most current information on youth in the juvenile justice system. The system allows each supervisor to monitor the progress of youth in their care and has received positive feedback from those who have used it.

### **Securitization of Tobacco Settlement Revenues Honorable Mention**

The County was to receive \$945 million over 25 years in its share of the Tobacco Settlement, but with the County's decision to use the money solely to fund health programs, it became imperative to ensure a steady income. To do this, the County sold its rights to future payments, receiving \$411 million for a special endowment fund that provides \$29.4 million annually for new and enhanced health care programs.

### **Increased Efficiency in Debt Collection Honorable Mention**

The County originally set out to find an independent contractor to collect debts, but a competitive bidding process revealed that the Office of Revenue and Recovery was best suited to manage, collect and account for the more than \$112 million in non-tax debt owed to the County. By improving collection management, the County has exceeded yearly collection targets by more than a million dollars, and collected \$17.3 million in outstanding debts last year alone.

### **Energy Management Program Honorable Mention**

In early 2001, faced with a summer of skyrocketing power rates and potential rolling blackouts, the County implemented an innovative energy savings program that helped reduce energy consumption by more than 15 percent. The County has since reduced electricity costs by \$4 million and received rebates from local utilities and the state totaling at least \$91,581.



## Recent DIBBS Awards

### Agriculture/Weights & Measures:

#### TINA THOMAS, CHARLES GROSS

Award: \$50 – Intangible

### Air Pollution Control District:

#### DAN PLOTNER, SAMANTHA EASTON

Awards: \$50 – Intangible

### Assessor/Recorder/County Clerk:

#### RUTH ARELLANO, ANGIE LUNA & JORGE ZURITA

Award: \$150 – Tangible

Savings: \$1,000

Suggestion: Recommended using a marriage package, which included photos, videos, pens, etc. for customers to purchase. Their suggestion improved customer service and generated revenue.

#### DANIELLE THOMTON

Award: \$50 – Tangible

Savings: \$220

Suggestion: Recommended repairing a non-working folding machine. Her suggestion saved the cost of purchasing a new machine.

### Auditor & Controller:

#### DENICE DUCHARME, LEE HILBERT

Awards: \$50 (, 2) – Intangible

### Child Support Services:

#### MELISSA ARNOLD

Award: \$1,664 – Tangible

Savings: \$11,093

Suggestion: Recommended purchasing telephone headsets from a vendor whose prices were lower than the current vendor. Her suggestion saved revenue.

#### ISMAEL ESPINOZA

Award: \$364 – Tangible

Savings: \$2,426

Suggestion: Recommended replacing an outside vendor with a designated employee to change simplex lock codes on doors to non-public work areas in the Department of Child Support Services. His idea reduced costs and improved security measures in the building.

#### MARIA HERRERA, LUCY PARRA & STEFANI CASTRO (Ms. Castro is now located in HHSA)

Award: \$333 – Productivity

Savings: \$6,627

Suggestion: Recommended using existing computer software and labels to generate self-pack labels with name and address information. Their suggestion has saved staff time creating labels.

#### MICHELLE KROGMAN

Award: \$212 – Tangible

Savings: \$1,414

Suggestion: Recommended using an outside vender to purchase cheaper clip-on fans for staff. Her suggestion reduced costs and provided a better work environment for staff.

#### MICHELLE KROGMAN

Award: \$102 – Tangible

Savings: \$683

Suggestion: Recommended purchasing I.D. card supplies from a direct source vendor at a cheaper price. Her suggestion saved revenue.

#### JONATHAN HARVEY, ROBERTO MONTES PATRICIA TORRES-TANG

Awards: \$50 – Intangible

### Clerk of the Board:

#### CLAIRE TOSH

Award: \$50 – Intangible (2)

### Community Service Group:

#### VICKI CHAPPELL

Award: \$50 – Intangible

### District Attorney:

#### MERRILL MORGAN

Award: \$50 – Intangible

### Environmental Health:

#### GARY GRIFFITH, JAMES HENDERSON JOHN MISLEH, AURA QUECAN

Awards: \$50 – Intangible

## Recent DIBBS Awards

### General Services:

#### PATRICIA ZEITOUNIAN

Award: \$20,000 - Tangible  
Savings: \$838,057  
Suggestion: Recommended correcting either incorrect meter readings by San Diego Gas & Electric or faulty meters at the County Operations Center Annex. This suggestion provided a large refund of revenue from SDG&E to the County of San Diego.

### Health & Human Services Agency:

#### LESTER LEFKOWITZ

Award: \$617 - Tangible  
Savings: \$4,112  
Suggestion: Recommended salvaging and recycling unused sets of index "custom tabs" for folders. His idea saved staff time and decreased the waste of unused supplies.

#### TREVOR LLOYD & DIANE SITZ

Award: \$562 - Productivity & Tangible  
Savings: \$4,986  
Suggestion: Recommended using the scanner to create an electronic file to distribute mass mailings via e-mail. Their suggestion saved paper and staff time.

#### NANCY HOBBS

Award: \$201 - Productivity  
Savings: \$4,191  
Suggestion: Recommended having the BD10 Screen available to Public Administration staff or allowing employees to enter worker number on the tele-screen to bring up the workers name, telephone number and mailstop. Her suggestion saved staff time and improved office efficiency.

#### DOROTHY AGNEW, PATRICIA BELLING NOLAN EGEMO, BRUCE ERRICSON (2), ANITA NUNO LUZ PONCE, KURT REUSSNER, MONICA REYNOSO SHERRY SCHADECK, MARILYN VILLALPANDO (2) GARY WENK

Awards: \$50 - Intangible

#### ELLEN PHILLIPS, DANIELLE WISDOM

Awards: \$50 - Intangible

### Housing & Community Development:

#### ROBERT CONTRERAS, LAYLA FISKE ELMA SALUTA (2), APRIL TORBETT

Awards: \$50 - Intangible

### Human Resources:

#### KIRSTEN AABOE HOPE (Now located in DPW) CHRISTINE WHEELER

Awards: \$50 - Intangible

### Library:

#### MARGARET ESTHER (3), SONYA HEISERMAN ALLYSON O'BRIEN, STEPHANIE WEINER

Awards: \$50 - Intangible

### Media & Public Relations:

#### BARBARA CASSADY

Award: \$50 - Tangible  
Savings: \$167  
Suggestion: Recommended changing the process of individually mailing video tapes back to same vendors, by combining the mailing of multiple video tapes. Her idea cuts the cost of mailing the video tapes in half and saved staff time.

(Ms. Cassidy also received two \$50 Intangible Awards.)

### Parks & Recreation:

#### JEFFREY SWAIN

Award: \$125 - Productivity & Tangible  
Savings: \$792  
Suggestion: Recommended personalizing renewal notices to all camping resident discount card holders. His idea saved postage and staff time using post cards.

### Planning & Land Use:

#### CRYSTAL CONTRERAS

Awards: \$50 - Intangible

### Probation:

#### KYLE KNOX

Award: \$705 - Tangible  
Savings: \$4,697  
Suggestion: Recommended changing the procedure for drug testing at facilities to focus on those individuals who have a history of certain types of drug use. This suggestion resulted in a reduction of the number of test supplies purchased.

#### DAVID LAMPLEY, KRISTINA ECHEVERRIA

Awards: \$50 - Intangible

## Recent DIBBS Awards

### Public Works:

#### MIKE BALLARD

Award: \$9,916 - Tangible  
Savings: \$82,497  
Suggestion: Recommended instead of purchasing a new vacuum tank trailer for the San Marcos landfill, use a chemical waste treatment to clean solids remaining in the rental tank trailers. His suggestion resulted in large savings to the County.

#### BAI WONG

Award: \$9,503 - Tangible  
Savings: \$78,362  
Suggestion: Recommended Public Works recover reimbursement dollars from Caltrans for an outstanding balance entitled to the County. This suggestion provided a large return of revenue to the County.

#### MARGARET BEZY

Award: \$3,889 - Tangible  
Savings: \$27,808  
Suggestion: Recommended loans be prepaid to the Integrated Waste Management Board. Due to the current economic climate, it is not cost effective to pay an interest rate that is higher than the interest the County earns on its own investments. Her suggestion saved revenue.

#### CARMELA DAVIS

Award: \$1,675 - Productivity & Tangible  
Savings: \$12,150  
Suggestion: Recommended to management that the next contract include a stipulation that the vendor remove and dispose of stockpiled chip seals. Her suggestion saved revenue for the County.

**RICHARD COBB, KATHY BAREFIELD  
ROBERTO DE LA TORRE, SHEILA FORD  
WARREN GARRETT, LISA LONSDALE  
BILL SCHUTT, MARY SCHWARZE**

Awards: \$50 - Intangible

#### JOHN FARRELL

Award: \$2,045 - Tangible  
Savings: \$13,635  
Suggestion: Recommended using the Los Angeles County Coroners office to examine gun shot residue kits instead of a previously used vendor. His suggestion has provided a more cost effective way to examine these types of kits and saved revenue.

#### STEVE WINCHELL

Awards: \$50 - Intangible

### Treasurer/Tax Collector:

#### SALVADOR IGNACIO

Award: \$458 - Productivity  
Savings: \$9,153  
Suggestion: Mr. Ignacio recommended using an interactive online form to automatically calculate interest based on entered dates and amount for refunds. His suggestion has saved staff time.

*(Mr. Ignacio also received one \$50 Intangible Award.)*

### Sheriff:

#### BYRON SONNENBERG

Award: \$3,383 - Tangible  
Savings: \$22,555  
Suggestion: Recommended using half of the recommended volume of reagents in DNA kits to perform test analysis. His suggestion cut the purchasing cost of the DNA kits in half and provided a more effective use of the kits.